

# News Release

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Middletown, Pennsylvania, June 13 -- The number and frequency of radiological monitoring samples of air, ground, water, animal and plant life around the Three Mile Island Station has been significantly intensified since the March 28, accident, according to TMI official Robert C. Arnold.

"The purpose of these changes," said Arnold, "is to assure that we can quickly and accurately identify any potential environmental impact. We have greatly increased the number of sampling stations and the frequency of sample taking, often by a factor of at least 30." Arnold, currently acting as head of TMI recovery operations, is Vice President of Generation for GPU Service Corporation, a GPU member company along with TMI's operator, Metropolitan Edison Company.

As part of the upgraded radiation monitoring program, drinking and surface water samples, which prior to the accident were collected every one to three months at seven locations, are now collected daily at nine locations. Milk samples, which were collected every one or two month, are now being collected more frequently. Radiation dose readings from twenty different locations are now being checked every month, rather than every three months under the prior schedule. Aquatic, air particulate and other samples are also being taken with greater frequency.

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"This environmental monitoring program often detects conditions which may not be related to plant activity," explained Arnold. "One example of this was in the positive results following the Chinese bomb test a couple of years ago or, more recently, some of the measurements showing trace amounts of iodine in several river water samples."

Some of these readings were associated with samples taken upstream from TMI and some others did not correspond to radioactivity levels measured at TMI. It is thought that in some cases the detected iodine has come from other sources. Nevertheless, all of the readings were reported to the appropriate state and federal authorities overseeing the radiation monitoring program.

Since the March 28 TMI-2 accident, on eight separate dabs small amounts of radioiodine have been detected in downriver water samples. In all cases, the levels detected have been within government drinking water standards. The first grouping of positive readings took place soon after the accident, on March 31 and April 1 and 2, and registered readings from about 0.4 to 0.7 units. In this case, the units are picocuries per liter. (A picocurie is a quadrillionth of a curie.) A reading of about 0.5 units was registered on April 27. A more recent series of positive readings were taken on May 23, 24, 25, and 27, and ranged from 0.3 to 2.5 units. No other iodine levels have been detected in downriver samples taken since the accident.

#### CURRENT PLANT STATUS

Three Mile Island Unit 2 is in a cold shutdown, natural circulation cooling mode. The hottest in-core temperature reading is about 280<sup>0</sup>F and the average is approximately 180<sup>0</sup>F. The residual heat output of the Unit 2 reactor is approx-

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